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Urban District of Burnham-on-Sea

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# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH



FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st DECEMBER, 1960

A faint, light blue watermark-like image of a classical building with four prominent columns and a triangular pediment occupies the background of the page.

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URBAN DISTRICT OF BURNHAM-ON-SEA

BUILDING AND SANITARY COMMITTEE 1960

Chairman:

MR. P.W. GRIFFIN

Wing Cdr. J.M. Adams	Mrs. C. Keedwell
Mr. A.H. Bristow	Mr. H.J. Pearce
Mr. P. Giles	Mr. A.T. Stanton
Mr. H.C. Groen	Mr. R.F. Tregelles
Nr. G. . Gulliford	Mr. W. Trenchard Cox
Mrs. E.E.J. Herring	Mr. N. Ward
Mr. J.D. Illett	Mr. C.C. Willis

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF 1960

Medical Officer of Health:

R.H. WATSON, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.

Assistant Medical Officer (Somerset C.C.)

CHRISTINE M. ROOKE, M.B., B.S.

Building and Chief Public Health Inspector:

W.B. GRAHAM, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Housing Officer and Assistant Public Health Inspector:

H.E. ROBINSON, M.A.P.H.I.



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1960

Health Department,  
Albert Street,  
BRIDGWATER.

Tel: Bridgwater 2689

August, 1961.

To:

The Chairman and Members of the  
Burnham-on-Sea Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you the Annual Report on the health of the Urban District, and the work of the Public Health Department during the year 1960. The report is set out in the manner of previous years, so that comparison with former reports can easily be made.

Examination of statistics for the Urban District shows us that while there was an estimated population increase of 230, deaths exceeded births by 18. The fact that 248 persons moved into the District during the year is to be welcomed, provided the increased population contained an adequate proportion of persons in the younger age groups. The composition of the population of the Urban District is reflected in two other sets of statistics. Firstly the birth rate, which shows an increase of almost 2 per 1,000 when it is standardised and secondly, the fact that out of a total of 166 deaths no fewer than 102 were of people over the age of 75 years. Standardising the death rate results in a reduction of almost 4.5 per 1,000. From these remarks it is obvious that the population of the Urban District, as at present constituted, is unduly weighted in the older age groups. When considering future development there is therefore a need not only to allow for population increase but actively to attract to the District people in the younger age groups and to provide for them adequate opportunities for employment. The Council should therefore consider whether more active steps should be taken to attract suitable industries to the District.

The incidence of notifiable infectious diseases has been low, a total of 38 cases were notified, as compared with 128 in the previous year. For the second year in succession no cases of poliomyelitis were notified.

Once again I wish to thank the Members of the Council, the Clerk, Officials of other departments and the staff of the Public Health Department, for their willing assistance and co-operation.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

R.H. WATSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

## SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

### GENERAL STATISTICS

Area ( including foreshore )	2,246 acres
Population ( census 1951 )	9,156
Population ( Registrar General's estimate ) 1960	10,020
No. of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1960	3,656
Rateable value on 31st December, 1960	£136,631
Sum represented by 1d rate on 31st December, 1960	549.10.11d.

Extracts from VITAL STATISTICS for the year 1960

#### Live Births

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	76	68	144
Illegitimate	1	3	4
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	77	71	148

Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population	14.77
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births	2.70
Still Births	2
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 live and still births	13.33
Total live and still births	150
Infant Deaths (deaths of infants under one year of age)	1
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - total	5.76
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - legitimate	6.94
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - illegitimate	Nil
Neonatal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)	6.76
Early Neonatal Mortality Rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)	6.76
Ferinatal Mortality Rate (stillbirths and deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 total live and still births)	2.00
Postnatal Mortality (including abortion)	Nil
Postnatal Mortality Rate per 1,000 live and still births	Nil

#### Deaths

Total number of deaths	165
Death Rate per 1,000 population	16.57

## Births.

The birth rate for any area will be dependent upon the composition of the population in that area. Obviously a population with a high proportion of persons of child bearing age will have more births per 1,000 of the population than an area with an unduly large number of people in the older age groups. To enable the birth rates of different areas to be compared, the Registrar General provides a comparability factor for each Local Authority area, which renders the birth rate of that area comparable with that of a district the population of which is of standard age and sex distribution. The birth rate for the Urban District adjusted in this manner is increased from 14.77 to 16.69 per 1,000 of the population. The birth rate for England and Wales was 17.1.

Birth rates for the Urban District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Burnham Urban District	14.14	13.89	13.39	15.30	14.77
Standardised Birth Rate	16.12	15.70	15.13	17.29	16.69
England and Wales	15.6	16.1	16.4	16.5	17.1

## Still Births.

2 still births were registered during the year. Both were legitimate. This number gives a rate of 0.20 per 1,000 of the population. The provisional National Rate for 1960 was 19.7 per 1,000 total births.

## Deaths.

The number of deaths registered in the Urban District during 1960 was 149. Of these 12 were deaths of non-residents and were transferred to the district in which the persons ordinarily resided. There were, on the other hand 29 deaths of Urban District residents registered outside the District. The total corrected number of deaths assigned to the District was 166 (72 males and 94 females). This was 28 more than in the previous year, and gave a crude death rate of 16.57.

This crude death rate cannot be used to compare the mortality with that of other districts, as the populations of all areas are not similarly constituted as regards age and sex distribution. The Registrar General supplies an "Area Comparability Factor" and the crude death rate multiplied by this figure can then be compared with the death rate of the country as a whole, or with the mortality of any other local area. The corrected death rate so obtained was 12.10 per 1,000 of the population and this was compared with 11.5 for England and Wales.

Death rates for the Urban District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Burnham Urban District	14.76	14.71	12.55	14.10	16.57
Standardised Death Rate	11.07	11.03	9.29	10.29	12.10
England and Wales	11.7	11.5	11.7	11.6	11.5

The following table shows the cause of death and sex distribution.

Cause of Death	M.	F.	Total
All Causes	72	94	166
1. Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	-	-	-
2. Other forms of tuberculosis	-	-	-
3. Syphilitic disease	-	-	-
4. Diphtheria	-	-	-
5. Whooping cough	-	-	-
6. Meningococcal infections	-	-	-
7. Acute poliomyelitis	-	-	-
8. Measles	-	-	-
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases	-	-	-
10. Malignant neoplasm of stomach	1	-	1
11. Malignant neoplasm of lung, bronchus	5	-	5
12. Malignant neoplasm of breast	-	2	2
13. Malignant neoplasm of uterus	-	2	2
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	9	4	13
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	2	-	2
16. Diabetes	-	1	1
17. Vascular lesions of the nervous system	12	24	36
18. Coronary disease and angina	10	17	27
19. Hypertension with heart disease	1	-	1
20. Other heart disease	11	14	25
21. Other circulatory disease	2	10	12
22. Influenza	1	1	2
23. Pneumonia	3	2	5
24. Bronchitis	4	3	7
25. Other diseases of respiratory system	2	-	2
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	-	2	2
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	-	1	1
28. Nephritis and nephrosis	-	-	-
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	1	-	1
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	-	-	-
31. Congenital malformations	-	1	1
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	4	9	13
33. Motor vehicle accidents	2	-	2
34. All other accidents	1	-	1
35. Suicide	1	1	2
36. Homicide and operations of war	-	-	-

Deaths. Age Groups 1960.

<u>Age</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Under 1 year	-	1	1
1 - 2 years	-	-	-
3 - 4 "	-	-	-
5 - 9 "	-	-	-
10 - 14 "	-	-	-
15 - 19 "	-	-	-
20 - 24 "	2	-	2
25 - 34 "	-	-	-
35 - 44 "	1	1	2
45 - 54 "	3	3	6
55 - 59 "	8	2	10
60 - 64 "	3	5	8
65 - 69 "	12	3	15
70 - 74 "	10	10	20
75 - 79 "	16	23	39
80 - 84 "	10	14	24
85 and over	7	32	39
	72	94	166

Cancer Mortality.

The number of deaths of Urban District residents from cancer was 23 (males 15, females 8). This was 8 less than the previous year. Cancer deaths constituted 13.9% of the total deaths during the year.

The following table shows the localisation of the disease in the 23 cases:-

<u>Localisation</u>	<u>Number of deaths</u>			
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>1959</u>
Stomach	1	-	1	6
Lungs	5	-	5	3
Breast	-	2	2	6
Uterus	-	2	2	-
Other and unspecified organs	9	4	13	16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>31</b>

It is interesting that this year as in the previous three years, all deaths from lung cancer occurred in males. The rate at which death occurred in the last four years combined is detailed in the following table :-

Year	Under 15	15/24	25/34	35/44	45/54	55/64	Over 65	Total
1957					1		2	3
1958						1	2	3
1959					2	1		3
1960				1		1	3	5

#### Deaths from Heart Disease.

Of 166 deaths, heart disease caused roughly 1 in every 5 (males 22, females 31). It represented 31.9% of the total deaths from all causes and was equivalent to a death rate of 5.3 per 1,000 of the population.

#### Infantile Mortality.

1 infant under one year of age died during the year. This gives an infantile mortality rate of 6.76 per 1,000 of all live births, while the corresponding rate for England and Wales was 21.7.

The following table shows the cause of death in each case:-

Infantile Mortality during 1960

Cause of death	Under 1 week	1 - 4 weeks	1 - 6 months	6 - 12 months	Total under 1 year
Pulmonary atelectasis	1				1

#### Population.

The estimated population of the Urban District as at June 1960 was 10,620, which shows an increase of 230 over the previous year. It is interesting to note population changes, and the following table illustrates the trend during the past twelve years:-

Year	Population increase	Natural increase	Change due to emigration or immigration
1949	- 1	6	- 7
1950	124	10	+ 114
1951	64	- 22	+ 26
1952	70	22	+ 48
1953	116	25	+ 91
1954	54	45	+ 9
1955	50	12	+ 38
1956	60	- 6	+ 66
1957	30	- 8	+ 38
1958	- 10	11	- 21
1959	80	16	+ 64
1960	230	- 18	+ 248

Natural increase = excess of births over deaths.

PRIVILEGED AND CONFINED OVER INFECTIOUS

AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

The following tables sets out the cases of notifiable diseases that occurred in the Urban District during 1960. The table is drawn up after making the necessary corrections in diagnosis by some of the practitioners or the Medical Officers at the Isolation Hospitals.

DISEASE	Age					Age			Admitted to hosp					
	Under 1 yr,	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	65 and over	Total
Cases	1													20
Sore Throat														3
Whooping Cough														5
Encouritis														10
TOTAL	2													38

During the previous year 128 cases of notifiable infectious diseases were notified.

### Diphtheria.

No cases of diphtheria were notified. During the year 116 children under the age of 5 years and 68 children between the ages of 5 - 15 years (giving a total of 184) were immunised against the disease.

### Acute Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis).

No cases were notified.

### Poliomyelitis Vaccination.

During the year the age limit for those eligible for polio immunisation was raised to 40 years, and as in the previous years visits were made to all the larger factories in the area and all persons who wished it, were immunised or were given the third reinforcing injection.

The following table shows the number of persons who received a course of primary vaccination (two injections) and number of persons who received a third (reinforcing) injection during the year 1960.

Children born 1943 - 1960	Young Persons born 1933 - 1942	Persons under 40 years of age	Persons over 40 years & Priority Groups	No. of persons (all groups) who recd. a third (reinforcing) injection
144	57	312	8	866

### Messies.

20 cases were notified, as compared with 85 in the previous year.

### Scarlet Fever.

The number of confirmed cases was 3.

### Vaccination against Smallpox.

The number of children vaccinated or revaccinated during the year was 131, as compared with 112 in the previous year.

#### Children Vaccinated

Under 1 year		1 to 4 years		5 to 14 years		15 years and over	
P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R
90	-	23	-	5	3	-	10

Vaccination is now voluntary, but the value of individual vaccination is, in my opinion, undiminished and I would advise all parents to have their children vaccinated, preferably at about the age of four months.

### Tuberculosis.

It is noteworthy to report that in 1960 no new cases of respiratory tuberculosis were notified, and that only one case of the non-respiratory form of the disease was reported. This was in a person of late middle age.

### B.C.G. Vaccination.

In order to raise the immunity to tuberculosis of school leavers, vaccination with B.C.G. vaccine was offered to all children between the ages of 13 and 14 years, attending school in the Mid-Somerset Divisional Area. 675 accepted the offer and received preliminary skin test, the "Heaf Test", to determine whether they had in fact already experienced some infection with tuberculosis. 359 of these gave a negative test and were vaccinated with the B.C.G. vaccine.

### Food Poisoning.

No cases were notified.

## GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES

### Laboratory Facilities.

Pathological specimens are sent to the laboratory at Musgrave Park Hospital, which forms part of the Public Health Laboratory service. Results of investigations are available with the minimum of delay and there is good liaison between the laboratory personnel and the field workers in the Public Health Department.

Examinations carried out during the year include:-

Milk samples	8
Water samples	29
Ice cream samples	44

### Home Help Service.

This service is provided by the County Council, with local administration by the Home Help Organiser, with an office at the Health Centre, Mount Street, Bridgwater.

The home helps have proved of very considerable value and much assistance was given to needy cases. During the year 39 cases received assistance.

These included the following types of cases:-

Maternity	13
Old age and infirmity	61
Tuberculosis	2
Chronic sick	14
Post operation	4
Emergency illness	3
Other cases	2

In many cases assisted, the patient or other members of the family would have been unable to remain at home, were it not for the Home Help Service.

In addition to the normal service, arrangements have been made for women to sit up with seriously ill cases where alternative arrangements cannot be made.

The number of Home Helps at 31.12.60 was as follows:-

Full time	9
Part time	12

#### National Assistance Act, 1948 - Section 47.

A number of cases were assisted through informal action, and in no case was it necessary for the Council to take statutory action to secure the admission of an old person to suitable accommodation.

#### SANITARY CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

##### Housing.

The number of permanent dwellings in the Urban District	3,259
The number of permanent dwellings owned by the Local Authority	535
Number of houses declared unfit under Section 9 of Housing Act, 1957	-
Number of houses closed as a result of an undertaking given by the owner or following the issue of Closing Orders	12
Number of houses made fit during the year	32

	Houses/flats erected during the year		Houses in course of erection	
	For slum clearance	For other purposes	For slum clearance	For other purposes
Local Authority	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Private Enterprise	Nil	62	Nil	47
Total	Nil	62	Nil	47

In the period from 1st April 1945 to 31st December 1960 a total of 750 houses have been built. These were made up of 396 by the Local Authority and 354 by private enterprise.

During the year the Council pursued their proposal to provide accommodation for old people as a special project.

At the end of the year there were 260 applicants for Council Houses.

#### Water Supplies.

The mains water supply was satisfactory both as to quality and quantity. The water is treated by chlorination and bacteriological tests were carried out on the treated water on 16 occasions, all of which gave excellent results.

#### Sewage Disposal.

Report of the Council's Consulting Engineers confirmed the inadequacy of the existing sewerage system to cope with present day demands, and the precarious situation existing at specific points along the line of sewers. The Consulting Engineers report in effect advocates the resewering of the greater part of the District, which in addition to dealing with present difficulties would allow for the future development of all suitable land lying to the north of existing developments in Durham. The task of implementing the report in full would be formidable and the Council are investigating the best practical means of dealing with the problem.

In previous reports attention has been drawn to the unsatisfactory condition which exist at the Clyce outfall at Bishopwearmouth. It is now over ten years since the Council undertook to deal with the matter and now after protracted negotiations have been concluded, it is to be hoped that the Engineers' scheme will be proceeded with energy. A relatively small scheme will not be needed and as it is quite independent of the Consulting Engineers' proposals for the major scheme there would appear to be no need for further delay.

### Camping Sites.

No licences have been issued for stationing of individual moveable dwellings. Four camping sites have been licensed, providing altogether for 480 moveable dwellings. Sanitary conditions are satisfactory and regular inspections are made by the Chief Public Health Inspector.

### Milk Supplies.

(a) The number of Registered Distributors is	19
(b) The number of Registered Dairy Premises (other than Dairy Farms) is	3

### Milk Sampling.

5 samples of Tuberculin Tested milk were taken, 3 of which gave satisfactory results.

2 samples of Pasteurised milk were taken, both of which were satisfactory.

1 sample of Sterilised milk was taken and gave a satisfactory result.

### Ice Cream.

The number of premises registered for manufacture and sale	2
For retail only	49

44 samples were taken during the year, the results being as follows:-

30 samples were placed in Provisional Grade	1
6 samples were placed in Provisional Grade	2
3 samples were placed in Provisional Grade	3
5 samples were placed in Provisional Grade	4

Samples which fall into grade 3 and 4 are considered to be unsatisfactory and are followed up by visits to the premises concerned. A number of the unsatisfactory reports obtained were in respect of one firm who obtained their ice cream from another area. The matter was taken up with the Health Department concerned and investigation revealed a fault in the manufacturing equipment. This was remedied and subsequent samples showed a satisfactory improvement.

### Slaughterhouses.

Ample facilities for slaughtering are available at the abattoir at Weston-super-Mare, and consequently the only slaughterhouse in the District which is licensed is that of the Highbridge Bacon Company.

Carcasses and offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part during the year were as follows:-

	Cattle excluding cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed					26,510	
Number inspected					26,510	
<u>All diseases except</u> <u>Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned					22	
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned					554	
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuber- culosis and cysticerci					2.09	
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned					2	
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned					2,689	
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis					10.18	
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned					-	
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration					-	
Normalised and totally condemned					-	
Total of meat condemned (In lbs.) for						
(a) Tuberculosis					23,226	
(b) Cysticercosis					-	
(c) Other					8,527	
Total (In lbs.) condemned					31,753	

The system of post mortem inspection in operation is that all carcasses are thoroughly examined by well-trained personnel employed by the Bacon Company. All carcasses suspected of having any abnormal condition are separated for further detailed examination; the number of carcasses so dealt with during the year was 3,252. The Public Health Inspectors attend each day when slaughtering takes place, check over the carcasses and make final decisions regarding condemnations.

#### Premises where food is prepared.

No statutory action was taken regarding enforcement of the provision of the Food and Drugs Act, and co-operation from food traders has continued to be good and improvements have been made to premises and equipment.

The number of premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act 1955, is 17. Frequent inspections are made to ensure satisfactory conditions.

#### Knackers Yard.

One knackers yard is registered in this District and is visited frequently.

#### Refuse Disposal.

Disposal of refuse is by direct tipping into disused claypits. As water accumulates in these pits, unsatisfactory conditions arise from time to time, mainly with the onset of warm weather. With this type of refuse disposal, trouble from fires and vermin are almost inevitable. In this area, as the site of disposal is adjacent to developed areas it is important that disposal methods more in keeping with present day standards should be initiated. The method of choice for the Urban District should be by properly operated "Controlled Tipping."





